

Message

From: Brabrand, Scott S [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=F83E4830B34F424397D87919F381F30C-BRABRAND, S]
Sent: 9/19/2020 2:55:52 PM
To: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=471dcb5b040f4abf87cf766d8c2e931f-Corbett San]
Subject: Re: TJ Admissions Process

Understood- thanks

Sent from my iPhone

From: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) <klcorbettsan@fcps.edu>
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 10:36:15 AM
To: Brabrand, Scott S <ssbrabrand@fcps.edu>
Subject: RE: TJ Admissions Process

As an FYI, it is not the timing of the work session that is energizing the community. It is the timing of looking at TJ. Suggest that we make it clear that we are responding to a statutory mandate.

From: Brabrand, Scott S
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 10:53 PM
To: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) <klcorbettsan@fcps.edu>
Cc: Madeja, Lisa <emadeja@fcps.edu>; Pekarsky, Stella G (School Board Member) <sgpekarsky@fcps.edu>; Sizemore Heizer, Rachna (School Board Member) <rsizemorehei@fcps.edu>; Tholen, Elaine V (School Board Member) <evtholen@fcps.edu>; Keys-Gamarra, Karen A (School Board Member) <akeysegamarr@fcps.edu>; McLaughlin, Megan (School Board Member) <momcloughlin@fcps.edu>; Omeish, Abrar (School Board Member) <aomeish@fcps.edu>; Meren, Melanie K (School Board Member) <mkmeren@fcps.edu>; Derenak Kaufax, Tamara (School Board Member) <tderenakkauf@fcps.edu>; Cohen, Laura Jane H (School Board Member) <lhcohen@fcps.edu>; Frisch, Karl V (School Board Member) <kvfrisch@fcps.edu>; Anderson, Ricardy J (School Board Member) <rjanderson@fcps.edu>; Smith, Marty K. <mksmith@fcps.edu>; Shughart, Jeremy A <jshughart@fcps.edu>; Ivey, Frances W <FWIvey@fcps.edu>; Zuluaga, Fabio <fezuluaga@fcps.edu>; Torre, John <jjtorre@fcps.edu>; Foster, John <jefoster@fcps.edu>
Subject: Re: TJ Admissions Process

Karen,

Thank you for your feedback and conversation this morning which I will review with my team.

The pillars you shared closely align with the 3 pronged approach to work on TJ admissions, the pipeline to TJ and supports for students entering TJ that I outlined in my presentation.

My presentation and communications also referenced "Merit Lottery" throughout the presentation and I agree with you that I will continue to emphasize that all of the current applicants are students of merit who are then screened out due to standardized testing as the final and ultimate barrier to admission.

The timing of the presentation can be clarified by board members with the community as this work session was requested by the board after some board members asked for our specific response to the October 1st deadline.

Sincerely,

Scott

Sent from my iPhone

From: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) <kcorbettsan@fcps.edu>

Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 3:05 PM

To: Brabrand, Scott S

Cc: Madeja, Lisa; Pekarsky, Stella G (School Board Member); Sizemore Heizer, Rachna (School Board Member); Tholen, Elaine V (School Board Member); Keys-Gamarra, Karen A (School Board Member); McLaughlin, Megan (School Board Member); Omeish, Abrar (School Board Member); Meren, Melanie K (School Board Member); Derenak Kaufax, Tamara (School Board Member); Cohen, Laura Jane H (School Board Member); Frisch, Karl V (School Board Member); Anderson, Ricardy J (School Board Member)

Subject: TJ Admissions Process

Scott,

As I mentioned to you this morning, the plan released on Monday has caused confusion in the community because of the over-reliance on the term lottery vs. merit. Communications of what we are doing is critical. Additionally, the timing of the presentation is misunderstood in the community. As we discussed, I think it is essential that we reframe the discussion and offer clarity to the community about our way forward. I have spoken with many of my colleagues (cc'd above) about this prior to yesterday's meeting or today. I will continue to reach out to others. As I mentioned, we really have 4 pillars of what must be done to create a diverse and inclusive environment at TJ which preserves its commitment to excellence in the sciences. These pillars should be incorporated into the plan submitted to the state in early October.

1. Clarify that we have a statutory requirement to submit a plan to the state by 9 October. We do not have a requirement to conduct a test in the fall for spring admissions. Frankly, a delay of the admissions process until after the 2nd quarter would allow for you and the team to ensure all of the pieces are in place to make this a successful process and not one that would be incremental by just eliminating the test and the recommendation which is causing much of the angst and rhetoric about undermining the quality of education at TJ. This timeframe is consistent with that used for universities where students apply for college admissions in January.
2. The plan submitted should include 4 pillars: Admissions, Supports for Students once admitted, ensuring the pipeline is based on opportunity and access for all, and a review of the process with possible tweaks as necessary.
 1. In the approach to admissions to TJ we need to be clear we are not eliminating merit but rather reframing our understanding of merit, similar to the manner in which 1000 universities, including some in the Ivy League have eliminated the reliance on the SAT or ACT. We will also need to communicate how we are identifying students with the highest aptitude in STEM vs test capabilities in this process. Elimination of the test does not preclude a review of a student's application to demonstrate merit based on a student statement, a demonstration of problem solving, and a review of transcripts to include a minimum GPA, Algebra in 8th grade, and possibly a panel review/interview. Once the initial screen is done, then the lottery occurs. To ensure that the demonstration of problem solving piece is fair, I would ask select college professors at different universities to develop the question annually. Additionally, it will be important to better communicate why a geographic distribution of students across the county will result in a change in demographics to include more students that are FRM, ELL, black, Hispanic, or twice exceptional.
 2. It is essential that we communicate that reframing how we assess merit in admissions does not mean that we compromise rigor in the academic programming at TJ. We will need to continue to have a summer boot camp for admitted students to prepare for the rigor. However, it is also essential that we provide supports for a more diverse population at TJ. This includes not only the introduction of the robust anti-bias, anti-hate curriculum for all students, but it means having the social emotional and academic supports for the more diverse student body which may not have large cohorts which can lead to feelings of isolation.

3. Ensuring the pipeline is based on opportunity and access for all is directly tied to this Board and previous Board's focus on the need to have fidelity of implementation. We need to have the same level of rigor and opportunity in math and sciences at every elementary and middle school in the county. Similarly, afterschool enrichment clubs must be consistently be offered at each middle school. The FCPS Promise must be realized at all of our schools. We need to ensure that in higher FRM schools that we have focused outreach and experiences for our students to meet and work with engineers, mathematicians and scientists so that they can envision themselves in these roles. I know that we have a number of outside organizations that want to help in this area. We should create a database of needs by school so that we can map the opportunities with people that are able to work with our students in these areas. I know that the American Association of Applied Sciences, the MIT Club of the Greater Washington Area, the TJ Partnership, and MSAOC are all anxious to help. We should also reach out to the minority based organization for this as well. Please see article on some of these resources <https://ripplematch.com/journal/article/11-professional-organizations-that-support-people-of-color-in-stem-e7b9ac6b/>. We need to be more systematic in how we utilize these resources and should include this as part of our planning for the school year and summer experiences for our students. We may also want to have TJ visit days for all of our 6th graders in the same way that we have our students in middle school visit the Finance Park, why not have them visit the labs of TJ? It is essential that we are identifying opportunities early on for students that demonstrate abilities in the sciences to develop these capabilities throughout their K-12 experience in FCPS and are encouraged to take advantage of TJ and our Academy programs in the sciences, healthcare and engineering.
4. We need to include in our plan metrics for success, a time period by which we will review the process used and the recognition that we may have to make adjustments to achieve our goals.

As promised, I have tried to capture our conversation this morning.

Karen

Karen Corbett Sanders
Mt. Vernon District Representative
Fairfax County School Board
Tel.: 571-279-7923

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Message

From: Meren, Melanie K (School Board Member) [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=7B7E4C022CB04FFF924FA5F01187DABE-MEREN, MELA]
Sent: 9/22/2020 10:22:03 PM
To: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=471dcb5b040f4abf87cf766d8c2e931f-Corbett San]
Subject: RE: TJ Admissions Process

I found your email sent. Disregard my earlier email asking if you had sent it.

From: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member) <klcorbettsan@fcps.edu>
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2020 11:27 AM
To: Brabrand, Scott S <ssbrabrand@fcps.edu>
Cc: Madeja, Lisa <emadeja@fcps.edu>; Pekarsky, Stella G (School Board Member) <sgpekarsky@fcps.edu>; Sizemore Heizer, Rachna (School Board Member) <rsizemorehei@fcps.edu>; Tholen, Elaine V (School Board Member) <evtholen@fcps.edu>; Keys-Gamarra, Karen A (School Board Member) <akeysgamarr@fcps.edu>; McLaughlin, Megan (School Board Member) <momclaughlin@fcps.edu>; Omeish, Abrar (School Board Member) <aomeish@fcps.edu>; Meren, Melanie K (School Board Member) <mkmeren@fcps.edu>; Derenak Kaufax, Tamara (School Board Member) <tderenak Kaufax@fcps.edu>; Cohen, Laura Jane H (School Board Member) <lhcohen@fcps.edu>; Frisch, Karl V (School Board Member) <kvfrisch@fcps.edu>; Anderson, Ricardy J (School Board Member) <rjanderson@fcps.edu>; Smith, Marty K. <mksmith@fcps.edu>; Shughart, Jeremy A <jshughart@fcps.edu>; Ivey, Frances W <FWIvey@fcps.edu>; Zuluaga, Fabio <fezuluaga@fcps.edu>; Torre, John <jjtorre@fcps.edu>; Foster, John <jefoster@fcps.edu>
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Scott,

Thanks for your response.

It was my intent to align my thoughts with your presentation while trying to address concerns I have heard expressed.

My email tried to capture much of what we discussed on Tuesday and agreed to in our next steps. The presentation was received in the community differently than what you tried to convey. The message received (not your intent) was that we were arbitrarily changing our processes to relay on a lottery that would impact the rigor of TJ. We need to be clear that we are reframing our admissions process to ensure opportunity and access while preserving rigor and creating a positive climate in the school for all students attending TJ. It will also be important that we take the time to implement this approach for the class of 2025 and thus the suggest for delaying the time for applications.

Hope this clarifies my intent.

Thanks again and enjoy this weather.

Karen

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Sent: 9/29/2020 3:40:00 PM
To: Anderson, Ricardy J (School Board Member) [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=2722e2eac8fb4713bca8bf78590c2d80-Anderson, R]
Subject: FW: TJ update

FYI

From: Corbett Sanders, Karen (School Board Member)
Sent: Sunday, September 27, 2020 4:52 PM
To: Brabrand, Scott S <ssbrabrand@fcps.edu>
Cc: Smith, Marty K. <mksmith@fcps.edu>; Madeja, Lisa <emadeja@fcps.edu>
Subject: Re: TJ update

Scott

Thanks for this. I hope that you will also take into account FRM. In looking at the Brookings Study and the presentation to the task force, taking into account this criteria leads to a more representative student body.

Thanks again for being open to the feedback of the Board. Ideally we will be able to look at the plan in advance of the meeting.

Karen

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 27, 2020, at 4:03 PM, Brabrand, Scott S <ssbrabrand@fcps.edu> wrote:

Dear Colleagues,

I met with Marty this afternoon. I am reviewing at cabinet tomorrow some alternatives to my TJ admissions proposal that includes an option for a more holistic admissions process which could serve as a potential replacement for the merit lottery and a look at proportional representation of slots based on region size for each of our 5 FCPS regional pathways.

I will certainly have my updated recommendations to you before our work session Thursday.

As an FYI, the Loudoun slots granted in our current proposal reflect their 10 year average of 61.6 students. We would recalculate the pathways numbers (including Loudoun) on an annual basis as a ratio of 8th grade enrollment.

Sincerely,

Scott

Exhibit 16